INDIAN STATISTICAL INSTITUTE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 66th MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL OF THE INSTITUTE HELD ON MARCH 21, 2018, AT ISI KOLKATA

Members/ invitees Attending the Meeting			
Serial no.	Name	Serial no.	Name
1	Sanghamitra Bandyopadhyay	11	Nabanita Das
2	Amita Pal	12	Partha P. Majumder
3	A R D Prasad	13	Prasun Das
4	Amita Majumder	14	Probal Dasgupta
5	Ayanendranath Basu	15	Rudra P. Sarkar
6	Debaprasad Mandal	16	Saurabh Ghosh
7	Dipti Prasad Mukherjee	17	Souvik Roy
8	Krishnendu Mukhopadhyaya	18	Susmita Sur-Kolay
9	Mahuya Datta	**Via Video-Conferencing From Other Centres**	
10	Md. Zafar Anis	19	Abhay Bhatt

At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the members but expressed her disappointment and disapproval regarding the poor attendance at the Headquarters and the other centres. She expressed the view that this undermines the significance and sanctity of the Academic Council. She questioned the effectiveness of conducting the meetings in the present format and suggested a discussion on this issue in the near future.

Agenda Item no. 1: Confirmation of the proceedings of the 65th meeting of the Academic Council held on November 28, 2017

The proceedings of the 65th meeting of the Academic Council held on November 28, 2017, were confirmed as circulated.

Agenda Item no. 2: Matters arising out of the 65th AC meeting

The Action Taken Report for the 65th meeting of the AC was confirmed as circulated.

Agenda Item no. 3: Consideration of the report of a committee constituted by office order no. DS/2016-17/0700(AC) dated November 21, 2016, to examine whether the course structures of all the academic programmes being conducted currently by the Institute have been ratified by the statutory bodies of the Institute, and to make appropriate recommendations

Prof. Partha P. Majumder, the sole member of the committee, briefed the AC members present regarding the findings of the committee. He emphasized that the committee had been unable to unearth documents to support the premise that the recommendations of the Academic Council regarding Teaching and Training Programmes, including introduction, discontinuation or modification and organization of courses, were forwarded to the ISI Council for ratification (as required by clause no. 9.2(1) of the Memorandum of Association of the Institute). Prior to 2007, there was no documentation available to support the assumption that these issues were discussed in the Academic Council even. In view of these findings, the committee has recommended that a comprehensive compilation of all ongoing courses – including eligibility conditions, rules and regulations governing the courses, course structures, and other relevant details – be presented to the Academic Council for consideration, discussion and recommendation to the Council for approval. In a forthcoming meeting of the Council, this recommendation may be placed as a separate agenda item, discussed in the meeting and approval of all ongoing programmes obtained. He suggested further that a committee could be formed to compile this information. The Chairperson sought suggestions regarding the composition of this committee. The Convener pointed out that a Brochure Committee had been constituted on the recommendation of the AC in its 61st meeting held in December 2015, to look into possible anomalies in the Student Brochures and to update all existing brochures. This Committee had already submitted Part I of the Brochure which was common to all the programmes, and was working on Part II, which contained details of the course structure for each programme, including the syllabi for the individual courses. She suggested that the updated Brochure as prepared by this Committee could serve the purpose and hence no new committee was required. This suggestion was accepted unanimously and Prof. Saurabh Ghosh,

the chairman of the Brochure Committee, was requested to report on the status of the work done by the Committee. He reported that substantial work had already been done and Part II of the Brochure should be ready by the end of April. In this context, the Chairperson requested an update on the status of the revision of the curriculum of the M.Tech. (CS) programme. Prof. Krishnendu Mukhopadhyaya, the chairman of the committee formed for this purpose, reported that work was in progress and was expected to be completed in six months.

Recommendation: The recommendations of the committee constituted by office order no. DS/2016-17/0700(AC) dated November 21, 2016, to examine whether the course structures of all the academic programmes being conducted currently by the Institute have been ratified by the statutory bodies of the Institute, were accepted unanimously. It was further recommended that the updated Student Brochures as prepared by the Brochure committee should be approved by the Academic Council and then forwarded to the ISI Council for ratification.

Agenda Item no. 4: Consideration of the proposed course structure and syllabus for the M.Tech. programme in Cryptology and Security submitted by committee formed by office order no. DO/2017/479 dated September 27, 2017.

Prof. Susmita Sur-Kolay expressed concerned regarding availability of teachers as well as other logistic issues like classrooms for the new programme. Prof. Krishnendu Mukhopadhyaya, the chairman of the committee formed for revision of the curriculum of the M.Tech. (CS) programme, pointed out that, in view of this, a re-look was needed into the revised curriculum, in which Cryptology and Security was being proposed as a track for specialization. The proposed course structure for the M.Tech.(CrS) programme was approved unanimously, and was to be forwarded to the ISI Council for approval.

Recommendation: The course structure and syllabus for the M.Tech. programme in Cryptology and Security, proposed by a committee formed by office order no. DO/2017/479 dated September 27, 2017, was approved unanimously, and was to be forwarded to the ISI Council for approval.

Agenda Item no. 5: Consideration of the final report of the committee formed for formulating policy and procedures for dealing with appeals made by the students on special circumstances, by office order no. DS/2014-15/1129 dated 30.12.2014.

In respect of the minimum percentage of teachers (excluding the concerned teacher(s)) whose support was required for a decision by the teachers' committee in case of appeals of Type I/II, Prof. Saurabh Ghosh opined that the numbers recommended by the committee (75/50) were too low. The Convener proposed that a one-time exception be made to the suggested deadlines for submission of an appeal in point no. (i) of the proposed procedures for consideration of an appeal, in respect of appeals made in connection with mid-semester and semestral examinations conducted in the first semester of the academic session 2018-19. This suggestion was accepted unanimously.

Recommendation: The recommendations for formulating policy and procedures for dealing with appeals made by the students on special circumstances, made by the committee formed by office order no. DS/2014-15/1129 dated 30.12.2014, were accepted unanimously, with a one-time exception to the suggested deadlines for submission of an appeal in point no. (i) of the proposed procedures for consideration of an appeal, in respect of appeals made in connection with mid-semester and semestral examinations conducted in the first semester of the academic session 2018-19.

Agenda item no. 6: Consideration of a proposal for inclusion of ISI in the Prime Minister's Research Fellowship (PMRF) scheme

Prof. Susmita Sur-Kolay welcomed the proposal, noting that ISI, being an Institute of National Importance, is at par with the institutes which are covered under this scheme. Prof. Krishnendu Mukhopadhyay opined that the coordinator for the scheme should be chosen with care. Prof. Abhay Bhatt commented that the selection criteria were not clearly stated and wondered what the status of someone selected from ISI would be. The proposal was generally welcomed, but the Chairperson cautioned that approval for ISI would take time since it involves the approval of the Union Cabinet, after the application is forwarded to the Prime Minister's Office by MoSPI.

Resolution: The proposal that the administrative ministry be approached to do the needful towards bringing the Indian Statistical Institute under the umbrella of the PMRF scheme so that

1. **this scheme is made available to the brightest candidates selected for research fellowships by ISI;**
2. **the eligibility criteria for the scheme is extended to include applicants who have successfully completed or are in the final year of the post-graduate(M.Stat/M.Math/M.S./M.Tech.) programmes of the institute;**

was unanimously accepted.

Agenda Item no. 7: Consideration of a proposal from Xavier University Bhubaneswar and other institutions for sharing of (residual) merit list after completion of the selection process by ISI and formulation of a general policy in this regard

Prof. Dipti P. Mukherjee wanted to know if there was some charge involved. Prof. Krishnendu Mukhopadhyaya wondered what kind of sharing was entailed, since the merit list is a public document. The Chairperson clarified that it essentially involved seeking consent for use of the information. Prof. Susmita Sur-Kolay felt that it was too premature since merit list-based admission has been in use at ISI for only since last year. Prof. Dipti Mukherjee, however, welcomed the proposal suggesting that the entire merit list and ranks be announced. Prof. Abhay Bhatt felt that ISI had nothing to lose and expressed his support to sharing of the entire merit list. However, sufficient safeguards were needed as data on candidates cannot be made public. Prof. Saurabh Ghosh also expressed his concerns in this regard. Dr. Prasun Das drew attention to the last few sentences of the penultimate paragraph in the letter from Xavier University and expressed concerns about the implications. The Chairperson clarified that past association between the Institute and faculty of the Economics Research Unit was on an individual level and did not involve any institutional commitment. Prof. Amita Majumder added that the interaction followed a request received from the university and there was no formal arrangement. Prof. Mukhopadhyaya pointed out that though the request had been received for the current year, it was not feasible to entertain it this year since prior consent of applicants had not been taken as the application process for 2018 was already over. He

emphasized that a policy must be decided on first. The Chairperson suggested that a committee should be constituted to formulate a policy with necessary safeguards. Prof. Sur-Kolay pointed out that a response must be sent to the Vice Chancellor of Xavier University regarding our concerns and wondered whether ISI should make a distinction between government-funded institutions and privately-funded ones in this respect. It was decided that a committee would be formed under the chairmanship of Prof. Arunava Sen to formulate a policy with necessary safeguards in this regard. The other members of the committee would be decided in consultation with the chairman.

Resolution: It was resolved that a committee would be constituted under the chairmanship of Prof. Arunava Sen to formulate a general policy with necessary safeguards regarding sharing of (residual) merit lists with other educational institutions after completion of the selection process by ISI.

Agenda Item no. 8: Reporting of selection criteria recommended by Committee formed by Office Order no. DS/17-18/067 dated May 15, 2017, for candidates who are eligible for waiver from written tests for admission in 2018

Prof. Mahuya Dutta, the chairperson of the committee, explained the rationale behind the selection criteria that had already been announced for admission in 2018. After some discussion, it was decided that the criteria be used for admission in the current year but should be reviewed in time for admission in 2019.

Resolution: It was resolved that the selection criteria recommended by the Committee formed by Office Order no. DS/17-18/067 dated May 15, 2017, for candidates who are eligible for waiver from written tests for admission in 2018, be used for admission in 2018, but should be reviewed in time for admission in 2019.

Agenda Item 9: Consideration of a report on a meeting convened by the Dean of Studies of all concerned faculty of the Institute on March 6, 2018, to discuss the modalities related to the formation of a single RFAC for JRF(CS), as resolved in the 64th meeting of the Academic Council of the Institute, held in September-October, 2017.

The Chairperson stated categorically that a decision taken in a meeting of the Academic Council must stand. Review of any decision can always be done from time to time based on how it is working. A decision that had been taken in an earlier meeting on a matter under discussion for quite some time, with the proceedings of the meeting duly circulated and ratified in the following meeting, cannot be overturned except by the AC itself. The outcome of the meeting that had been convened by the Dean of Studies on March 6 in pursuance of the recommendation of the AC, to discuss the modalities of the issue, cannot have any impact on the decision. Prof. Krishnendu Mukhopadhyaya drew attention to the flurry of distasteful and unpleasant e-mails that had followed after the notice announcing the meeting had been circulated, and expressed his unhappiness. The Chairperson made clear her disapproval of such unseemly behavior, emphasizing that decorum must be maintained, and everyone should desist from using offensive language or make insinuating remarks in emails or other communications. Prof. Sur-Kolay reminded the members present that the proposal for a single RFAC for Computer Science research fellows had been initiated by Computer Science faculty and there had been around 40 signatories. Of the nearly two hundred and sixty research fellows currently in the institute, around one hundred and ten were working in the area of Computer Science. Of these, around eighty-five were in the Computer and Communication Sciences Division while the rest belonged to the Applied Sciences Division. The intake of research fellows in Computer Science was interdisciplinary, and the spectrum of research had become quite broad. In view of this, a review of course requirements was urgently required. Moreover, in the meeting convened on March 6, there had been a general consensus on the need to review the course requirements for JRF (CS). In the light of this discussion, it was decided that a committee would be formed for this purpose with Prof. Sur-Kolay as the chairperson. The other members of the committee would be decided in consultation with her.

Resolution: It was resolved that a committee would be formed with Prof. Susmita Sur-Kolay as chairperson to review course-work requirements for research fellows in Computer Science. The other members of the committee would be decided in consultation with the chairperson.

Agenda Item no. 10: Consideration of a proposal for holding the admission test for JRF programmes at an earlier date, separately from the admission tests for degree/diploma programmes (as resolved in the 64th meeting of the AC held in September-October 2017)

The proposal was generally welcomed in principle. The only concern was the timing of the test. Prof. Sur-Kolay suggested that the Dean of Studies could seek views from the AC members in this regard. This suggestion was accepted, and it was decided that that it should be implemented in 2018-19 for selection of JRFs for the academic session 2019-20. Prof. Saurabh Ghosh envisaged problems in respect of candidates who are current students of the Institute and may be eligible for waiver from written tests, if the timing of the admission test is not appropriate.

Resolution: It was resolved that the admission test for JRF programmes would be held at an earlier date, separately from those for degree/diploma programmes, with effect from 2018-19 for selection of JRFs for the academic session 2019-20. The Dean of Studies would seek views from the members of the Academic Council regarding the timing of the test.

Agenda Item no. 11: Consideration of the (interim) report of the Committee formed by Office Order no. DS/2017-18/752A dated November 27, 2017, for formulation of uniform rules related to evaluation of projects, etc. across all degree and diploma programmes of the Institute.

Prof. Amita Majumder presented the highlights of the recommendations made by the committee in respect of the M.Math. programme, stating that the same would be extended to other programmes and the final report will be submitted. Prof. Mahuya Dutta emphasized that uniformity was not desirable. The convener clarified that the uniformity alluded to was in respect of the broad structure, including the evaluation procedure. The recommendations in respect of the M.Math. programme were accepted. It was decided that the guidelines could be implemented with immediate effect, and the committee would re-submit its report after extending the recommendations to other programmes.

Resolution: The recommendations, in respect of the M.Math. programme, of the Committee formed by Office Order no. DS/2017-18/752A dated November 27, 2017, were accepted. It was decided that the guidelines could be implemented with immediate effect, and the committee would re-submit its report after extending the recommendations to other programmes.

Agenda Item no. 12: Consideration of a proposal for the revision of the syllabus of the MS (LIS) programme

The proposal was accepted, and it was decided that a committee would be constituted for this purpose with Prof. ARD Prasad as chairman. Other members of the committee would be decided in consultation with him. Prof. Dipti Prasad Mukherjee suggested the names of Dr. Mandar Mitra and Dr. Debapriyo Majumdar as members of this committee. This suggestion was accepted.

Resolution: It was resolved that a committee would be constituted under the chairmanship of Prof. ARD Prasad to review and revise the curriculum of the MS (LIS) programme. Dr. Mandar Mitra and Dr. Debapriyo Majumdar would be members of this committee. Other members would be decided in consultation with the chairman.

Agenda Item no. 13: Consideration of a proposal for a review of the course structure and syllabus of the M.Math. programme

The proposal was accepted, and it was decided that a committee would be constituted for this purpose with Prof. Debashish Goswami as chairman. Other members of the committee would be decided in consultation with him. Prof. Saurabh Ghosh suggested that though the M.Math. programme is not conducted in ISI Delhi, there should be members from that centre too.

Resolution: It was resolved that a committee would be constituted under the chairmanship of Prof. Debashish Goswami to review and revise the curriculum of the M.Math. programme. Other members would be decided in consultation with the chairman.

Agenda Item no. 14: Consideration of a proposal regarding weightage of end-semester examination, electives for B.Math. and M.Math. programmes as well as special topics for the M.Math. programme

Deferred.

Miscellaneous Agenda Items

1. **Application for rejoining ISI as a full-time research fellow by a former SRF who had resigned in May 2017.**

   After some discussion, it was generally agreed that the views of the RFAC of the Applied Statistics Division should be sought in this regard. Prof. Amita Majumder opined that such reinstatement should not be permitted. It was resolved that the request may be granted on a one-time basis subject to the recommendation of the RFAC of the Applied Statistics Division, and a general policy in this regard should be formulated in consultation with the Conveners of the five Ph.D.-D.Sc. Committees.

2. **Proposal for three new optional courses in the third semester of the PGDBA programme, forwarded by IIM Calcutta.**

   The proposal was approved.

   Sd/-
   SANGHAMITRA BANDYOPADHYAY

   Director, Indian Statistical Institute
   and Chairperson, Academic Council, ISI